

REMARKS

Favorable consideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 – 22 and 25 – 35 are currently active in this case and Claims 1, 11, 12, 13, 16 – 18, 25, and 27 have been amended, and Claims 23-24 have been cancelled by way of the present amendment. Each amended claim is supported by the specification and claims as originally submitted and no new matter has been added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-35 were rejected under various combinations of 35 USC 102, 103, and the cited art references. Claims 24-26 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were identified as containing allowable subject matter (allowable if rewritten in independent form).

Applicants appreciatively acknowledge the Examiner's identification of allowable subject matter in Claims 24-26. Each of independent Claims 1, 11, 16, 17, 18, and 27 have been amended to incorporate the patentably distinguishing features as already identified as being allowable and found in Claim 24. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1, 11, 16, 17, 18, and 27 are patentable. Based on the patentability of the independent Claims, Applicants further respectfully submit that dependent claims 2-10, 12-15, 19-22, 25-26, and 28-35 are also patentable.

If any further issues arise with respect to the claim amendments, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned who will be happy to work with the Examiner to address any such issues that may arise.

Consequently, no further issues are believed to be outstanding, and it is respectfully submitted that this case is in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees (or credit any overpayment) associated with this communication and which may be required under 37 CFR §1.78 to Deposit Account No. 50-2603, referencing Attorney Docket No. 355118.00400. A duplicate sheet is attached.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: December 13, 2005

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